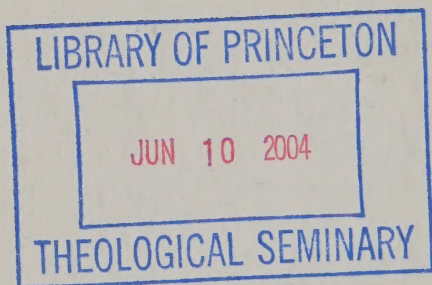


CHINESE  
PROVERBS  
FROM  
OLDEN  
TIMES



PN  
6519  
.C5  
B45  
1956



PN 6519 .C5 B45 1956

Chinese proverbs from olden  
times

Eileen Moffett  
Princeton, N.J.  
June 7, 1971







# CHINESE PROVERBS FROM OLDEN TIMES

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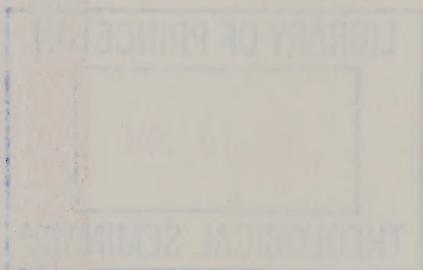
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## N O T E

EVERYBODY uses proverbs unconsciously in daily speech, and a people's language expresses character and color by such use. Scholars say the Chinese have more proverbs, and use them more, than any other people. This is natural enough, for the deference formerly paid in China to ancestors and traditions would encourage use of the old folk-wisdom. Our pleasure in hearing these proverbs comes sometimes from the echo they carry of our own familiar phrases, sometimes from the echo of city, mountain, and valley life strange and far. The present English renderings are free; and often attempt, but cannot recapture, the true telescopic-telegraphic brevity of the originals.



PROVERBS  
FROM  
OLDEN  
TIMES



SWIFTEST HORSE  
CANNOT OVERTAKE  
THE WORD ONCE SPOKEN

BEFORE YOU BEAT THE DOG  
LEARN HIS MASTER'S NAME

WE ALL LIKE LAMB . . .  
EACH HAS A DIFFERENT  
WAY OF COOKING IT

EVEN YOUR  
OWN TEN FINGERS  
ARE UNEQUAL

HIDE YOUR OFFENDED  
HEART . . .  
KEEP YOUR VALUED FRIEND

YELLOW GOLD . . .  
PLENTIFUL COMPARED TO  
WHITE-HAIRED FRIENDS





HE WHO CARVES  
THE BUDDHA  
NEVER WORSHIPS HIM

PLEASURES ARE SHALLOW  
SORROWS DEEP

WITH TRUE FRIENDS ...  
EVEN WATER  
DRUNK TOGETHER  
IS SWEET ENOUGH

MAYBE NOT SO FINE  
BUT MY COUNTRY'S WINE

CLEAR CONSCIENCE  
NEVER FEARS  
MIDNIGHT KNOCKING

ILLNESS COMES IN  
BY MOUTH ...  
ILLS COME OUT BY IT

HONEST JUDGE  
LEAN CLERKS . . .  
POWERFUL GOD  
FAT PRIESTS

THE DAY YOUR HORSE DIES  
AND YOUR MONEY'S LOST . . .  
YOUR RELATIVES  
CHANGE TO STRANGERS

WHILE IT IS STILL  
GOOD WEATHER . . .  
CLEAN THE DRAINPIPES

IN A NARROW LANE  
BEWARE ENEMIES

NEVER TRY TO CATCH  
TWO FROGS  
WITH ONE HAND

FISHES SEE THE WORM  
NOT THE HOOK







WE FORGET EVEN INCENSE  
IN EASY TIMES . . .  
COME HARD TIMES  
WE EMBRACE  
THE BUDDHA'S FEET

FRIEND, DO NOT TRY  
TO BORROW COMBS  
FROM SHAVEN MONKS

FOOD CURES HUNGER  
STUDY CURES IGNORANCE

THE CLEVER DOCTOR  
NEVER TREATS HIMSELF

TWO GOOD TALKERS . . .  
NOT WORTH  
ONE GOOD LISTENER

MAN IS HEAVEN AND EARTH  
IN LITTLE

ONE DOG  
BARKS AT A SHADOW...  
A HUNDRED  
BARK AT HIS SOUND

EVEN IN A BAMBOO TUBE  
SNAKES TRY TO WRIGGLE

CHANGE CLOTHES YOU CAN  
YOU CANNOT  
CHANGE THE MAN

AFTER GREAT THUNDER  
LITTLE RAIN

TO MOVE A TREE  
DIG UNDER THE ROOT

NO MELON-PEDDLER CRIES:  
BITTER MELONS...  
NO WINE-DEALER SAYS:  
SOUR WINE





A NATION'S TREASURE . . .  
SCHOLARS

DON'T WASTE GOOD IRON  
FOR NAILS . . .  
GOOD MEN FOR SOLDIERS

BITTER WORDS  
ARE GOOD MEDICINE . . .  
SWEET WORDS  
CARRY INFECTION

TO TALK GOODNESS  
IS NOT GOOD . . .  
ONLY TO DO IT IS

ONE MAN TELLS A LIE . . .  
DOZENS REPEAT IT  
AS THE TRUTH

A GOOD NEIGHBOR . . .  
A FOUND TREASURE

THE LITTLE LEARNED MAN  
IS USEFUL TO THE STATE...  
WHAT USE THE GREAT BIG  
BLOCKHEAD?

NEW BOOTS: BIG STEPS

MALLET STRIKES CHISEL...  
CHISEL SPLITS WOOD

EMPTY THE CLEAR PATH  
TO HEAVEN...  
CROWDED THE DARK ROAD  
TO HELL

HONEST SCALES  
AND FULL MEASURE  
HURT NO MAN

IN ALL THE WORLD  
PEOPLE ENJOY SALT  
AND MONEY





EMPEROR'S RELATIVES TOO  
WALK SOFTLY  
IN STRAW SANDALS

FRIENDSHIPS LAST  
AS LONG AS MEAT AND WINE;  
MARRIAGES LAST  
AS LONG AS RICE AND FUEL

IN MULTITUDES OF WORDS  
SURELY SOME MISTAKES

THE GODS . . . THOUSANDS  
AND TEN THOUSANDS . . .  
ARE ONE GOD

IT'S YOUR OWN LANTERN . . .  
DON'T POKE HOLES  
IN THE PAPER

BETTER LEAN AND GOOD  
THAN FAT AND EVIL

THOUGH YOU HIDE IT  
FROM MEN . . .  
HEAVEN SEES YOUR ACT

SLANDER CANNOT DESTROY  
AN HONEST MAN . . .  
WHEN THE FLOOD RECEDES  
THE ROCK IS THERE

EASY TO RUN DOWN HILL . . .  
MUCH PUFFING TO RUN UP

THE BLIND  
ARE QUICK TO HEAR . . .  
THE DEAF TO SEE

NO NEEDLE IS SHARP  
AT BOTH ENDS

DOCTORS WHO RIDE CHAIRS  
NEVER RIDE THEM  
TO HOVELS





THE RICH MAN PLANS  
FOR TOMORROW...  
THE POOR MAN FOR TODAY

WISE BEES SIP NOT  
FROM FALLEN FLOWERS

MAN MUST BE SHARPENED  
ON MAN  
LIKE KNIFE ON STONE

FIREWOOD ALONE WILL NOT  
START A FIRE

THE DOOR TO VIRTUE...  
HEAVY AND HARD TO PUSH

DRAGON BEGETS DRAGON  
PHOENIX BEGETS PHOENIX

EMPTY BOTTLE...  
HOLLOW HOSPITALITY



HE WATCHES CHESS GAME  
IN SILENCE . . .  
WHAT A SUPERIOR MAN!

THE DRY FINGER  
LIFTS NO SALT

THE YANGTSE  
NEVER RUNS BACKWARD . . .  
MAN RECAPTURES NOT  
HIS YOUTH

GARDEN FLOWERS LARGER  
FIELD FLOWERS STRONGER

IF YOU WANT YOUR DINNER  
DON'T INSULT THE COOK

ABROAD  
WE JUDGE THE DRESS . . .  
AT HOME  
WE JUDGE THE MAN





CONQUERORS ARE KINGS . . .  
THE BEATEN ARE BANDITS

A BAR OF IRON  
CONTINUALLY GROUND . . .  
A NEEDLE

WORDS SPOKEN  
MAY FLY AWAY . . .  
THE WRITING-BRUSH  
LEAVES ITS MARK

WORK FEARS  
THE BUSY MAN

SCHOOLMASTER  
STICK TO YOUR BOOKS . . .  
FARMER, TO YOUR PIGS

BEFORE TELLING SECRETS  
ON THE ROAD . . .  
LOOK IN THE BUSHES



GIRLS MARRY  
TO PLEASE PARENTS . . .  
WIDOWS  
TO PLEASE THEMSELVES

HONEY IN HIS MOUTH  
KNIVES IN HIS HEART

THAT MAN WHO KNOWS  
TOO MANY TRADES . . .  
HIS FAMILY STARVES

CURSE YOUR WIFE  
AT EVENING . . .  
SLEEP ALONE AT NIGHT

THE FULL TEAPOT  
MAKES NO SOUND

WHEN WINGS ARE GROWN  
BIRDS AND CHILDREN  
FLY AWAY



TO BUILD IT, TOOK  
ONE HUNDRED YEARS . . .  
TO DESTROY IT, ONE DAY

EASY TO KNOW MEN'S FACES  
NOT THEIR HEARTS

ONE GENERATION PLANTS  
THE TREES . . .  
ANOTHER GETS THE SHADE

FOR A SWIFT ARROW  
PULL HARD ON THE STRING

NO MATTER HOW STOUT . . .  
ONE BEAM  
CANNOT SUPPORT A HOUSE

VIRTUOUS TEN YEARS  
STILL NOT ENOUGH . . .  
EVIL ONE DAY  
TOO MUCH ALREADY



MONEY WILL OPEN  
BLIND MEN'S EYES ...  
MONEY WILL CLOSE  
FAT PRIESTS' EYES

GRASS FEARS THE FROST ...  
FROST FEARS THE SUN

YOU CAN'T FILL YOUR BELLY  
PAINTING PICTURES  
OF BREAD

DON'T SEND A SMALL BOAT  
FOR SUCH HEAVY CARGO

HE WHO WAS BITTEN  
BY A SNAKE  
AVOIDS TALL GRASS

DO NOT TEAR DOWN  
THE EAST WALL  
TO REPAIR THE WEST





SEEKING FISH?  
DON'T DIVE IN THE POND . . .  
GO HOME AND GET A NET

CLAY BUDDHA  
SCORNS MUD BUDDHA

IF YOU SEEK A JEWEL  
OF A WOMAN . . .  
LOOK IN BOOKS

WHEN THE EMPEROR ERRS  
THE PEASANT SHIVERS

TO KNOW THE ROAD AHEAD  
ASK THOSE COMING BACK

SCHOLARS TALK BOOKS  
BUTCHERS TALK PIGS

HE WHO RIDES THE CHAIR  
IS A MAN . . .  
LIKE THOSE WHO CARRY IT

WATER AND WORDS . . .  
EASY TO POUR  
IMPOSSIBLE TO RECOVER

HEAVEN LENT YOU A SOUL  
EARTH WILL LEND A GRAVE

THE HOUSE WITH AN OLD  
GRANDPARENT  
HARBORS A JEWEL

THE HEART  
OF A LITTLE CHILD . . .  
PURE AS THE BUDDHA

BETTER TO BELIEVE  
TOO MUCH  
THAN NOTHING AT ALL

BETTER TO BE KIND AT HOME  
THAN BURN INCENSE  
FAR AWAY





RICHES ADD TO THE HOUSE  
VIRTUES TO THE MAN

REFORM A GAMBLER...  
CURE LEPROSY

TOO MUCH TALK  
BEWARE TROUBLE...  
TOO MUCH FOOD  
BEWARE INDIGESTION

WHEN THE MELON RIPENS  
IT WILL FALL OF ITSELF

TAKE A SECOND LOOK...  
IT COSTS YOU NOTHING

FROG IN A DEEP WELL...  
HAPPY FROG

GOLD HAS ITS PRICE  
LEARNING IS BEYOND PRICE



EASY TO BEND THE BODY...  
NOT THE WILL

ENOUGH SHOVELS OF EARTH  
A MOUNTAIN...  
ENOUGH PAILS OF WATER  
A RIVER

TO SUCCEED, CONSULT  
THREE OLD PEOPLE

IF YOU HURRY  
THROUGH LONG DAYS...  
YOU WILL HURRY  
THROUGH SHORT YEARS

TOUCH BLACK PAINT...  
HAVE BLACK FINGERS

DO NOT PRAY FOR GOLD...  
PRAY FOR GOOD CHILDREN  
HAPPY GRANDCHILDREN







VIRTUE: CLIMBING A HILL  
VICE: RUNNING DOWN

WIFE OF ONE . . . MAY NOT  
EAT THE RICE OF TWO

IF HEAVEN MADE HIM  
EARTH CAN FIND SOME USE  
FOR HIM

AROUND A WIDOW'S DOOR  
GREEN SLANDERS GROW

TO UNDERSTAND  
YOUR PARENT'S LOVE  
BEAR YOUR OWN CHILDREN

LOOKING FOR FISH?  
DON'T CLIMB A TREE

THE OLDER THE GINGER  
THE MORE IT BITES

FAR WATERS CANNOT  
QUENCH NEAR FIRES

CARELESS RAT CHEWING  
ON A CAT'S TAIL . . .  
BEWARE LIGHTNING!

THE INNKEEPER . . . ONE HOST  
UNWORRIED BY GUESTS'  
BIG APPETITES

THE CLEVEREST  
DAUGHTER-IN-LAW  
CANNOT STEW AN EMPTY POT

YOU WANT NO ONE  
TO KNOW IT? . . .  
THEN DON'T DO IT

VIRTUE BECOMES A WIFE  
BEAUTY BECOMES  
A CONCUBINE



SIMPLE TO OPEN A SHOP...  
ANOTHER THING  
TO KEEP IT OPEN

THE RICH  
COUNT YEAR TO YEAR...  
THE POOR DAY TO DAY

YOU CANNOT DRAW  
WHITE CLOTH  
FROM A DYEING VAT

DO NOT OPEN A SHOP  
UNLESS YOU LIKE TO SMILE

TODAY'S WINE  
I SWALLOW NOW...  
TOMORROW'S SORROW  
I'LL SWALLOW THEN

DON'T LAUGH AT AGE...  
PRAY TO REACH IT TOO



WHAT THE EYE SEES NOT  
THE HEART CRAVES NOT

FORTUNE AND FLOWERS  
DO NOT LAST FOREVER

MORE THAN ONE TREE  
GAVE WOOD  
TO BUILD THIS TEMPLE

EASY TO BELIEVE  
IN HEAVEN'S LAW...  
BUT SO HARD TO KEEP

THE PEONY IS BEAUTIFUL  
YET IT IS SUPPORTED  
BY A STALK

WHEN THE MANTIS  
HUNTS THE LOCUST...  
HE FORGETS THE SHRIKE  
THAT'S HUNTING HIM





FORGET THE FAVORS  
YOU HAVE GIVEN...  
REMEMBER THOSE RECEIVED

WHO RULES BY CRUELTY  
MUST SLEEP LIGHTLY  
OR SLEEP LONG

TEACH YOUR SON  
AT THE TABLE  
YOUR WIFE ON THE PILLOW

IN EVERY FAMILY'S  
COOKING-POT...  
ONE BLACK SPOT

DEAD SONG-BIRDS  
MAKE A SAD MEAL

THE TONGUE  
A TERRIBLE WEAPON...  
CRUSHES MEN TO DEATH

THE COURT OFFICIAL  
IN ONE LIFE  
HAS SEVEN REBIRTHS  
AS A BEGGAR

OF A DEAD LEOPARD  
WE KEEP THE SKIN . . .  
OF MAN HIS REPUTATION

THOUGH MY LEFT HAND  
DEFEAT THE RIGHT . . .  
WHO WINS?

THE GREAT ELEPHANT . . .  
HUNTED FOR IVORY COMBS

LEARNING  
IS ROWING UPSTREAM . . .  
ADVANCE OR LOSE ALL

PRIESTS RETURN  
TO THE TEMPLE  
MERCHANTS TO THE SHOP





LONG ROADS TEST THE HORSE  
LONG DEALINGS THE FRIEND

WHEN THE TREE FALLS  
THE SHADOW FLIES

THE CAREFUL FOOT  
CAN WALK ANYWHERE

I DREAMED A THOUSAND  
NEW PATHS . . .

I WOKE AND WALKED  
MY OLD ONE

WHEN THE TREE WAVES  
WIND IS STIRRING

BETTER FRIENDS VISIT  
THAN LIVE WITH YOU

MEN STARE AT THE PROFIT  
AND STEP IN THE PITFALL



WINE FLUSHES THE FACE  
BUT WEALTH  
QUICKENS THE HEART

LEARN TO HANDLE  
A WRITING-BRUSH . . .  
AND YOU'LL NEVER HANDLE  
A BEGGING-BOWL

OXEN PLOW THE FIELD  
BUT HORSES EAT THE GRAIN

IF THE DOG LEAVES  
WHEN THE CAT ENTERS . . .  
NO FIGHT TODAY

NO DETERMINATION . . .  
UNTEMPERED STEEL

DON'T ASK THE GUEST  
IF YOU SHOULD KILL  
YOUR HEN





THOUGH EVIL WHISPERS  
HEAVEN HEARS IT  
LOUD AS THUNDER

PEACE AND TRANQUILLITY...  
A THOUSAND GOLD-PIECES

FOLLOW BUSY MEN  
AND SLEEP INDOORS...  
FOLLOW BEGGARS  
AND SLEEP OUTDOORS

WE CAN STUDY  
UNTIL OLD AGE...  
AND STILL NOT FINISH

IN BED BE WIFE AND HUSBAND  
IN HALL EACH OTHER'S  
HONORED GUEST

O EGGS, NEVER FIGHT  
WITH STONES!

MEN WHO LIVE TOO NEAR  
THE TEMPLE  
LAUGH AT THE GODS

STAND OVER WORKMEN  
AT THEIR LABORS  
NOT THEIR MEALS

IF YOU GIVE NO HELP  
TO OTHERS . . .  
YOU ARE WASTING  
THOSE PRAYERS TO BUDDHA

MANY A GOOD FACE  
UNDER A RAGGED HAT

DOGS HAVE NO PREJUDICE  
AGAINST THE POOR

IF YOU STAND STRAIGHT  
DO NOT FEAR  
A CROOKED SHADOW





THREE YEARS TO LEARN  
INDUSTRY...

THREE DAYS TO LEARN  
IDLENESS

WHEN HEAVEN WANTS RAIN  
WHEN WIDOWS  
WANT REMARRIAGE...  
IT WILL BE SO

DIVIDE AN ORANGE...  
IT TASTES JUST AS GOOD

SON WITHOUT LEARNING:  
YOU HAVE RAISED AN ASS...  
DAUGHTER  
WITHOUT LEARNING:  
YOU HAVE RAISED A PIG

RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS  
MAY CHANGE...  
HUMAN NATURE NEVER

AN INCH OF GOLD  
CANNOT PURCHASE  
AN INCH OF TIME

JADE AND MEN...  
BOTH ARE SHAPED  
BY BITTER TOOLS

STUPID IS HAPPY...  
HAPPY IS NOT ALWAYS  
STUPID

THE MIND...  
EMPEROR OF THE BODY

FROM A GABLED ROOF  
THE ROLLING MELON  
HAS TWO CHOICES

MANY BOOKS  
DO NOT USE UP WORDS...  
MANY WORDS  
DO NOT USE UP THOUGHT





A BAD WORD WHISPERED  
WILL ECHO  
A HUNDRED MILES

IN LIFE BEWARE THE JUDGE  
IN DEATH THE DEVIL

EASY TO ENROLL  
A THOUSAND SOLDIERS . . .  
BUT AH, ONE GENERAL!

IN THE THEATER  
FREE SEATS HISS FIRST

RUNAWAY SON  
A SHINING JEWEL . . .  
RUNAWAY DAUGHTER  
TARNISHED

BEAT YOUR DRUM  
INSIDE THE HOUSE  
TO SPARE THE NEIGHBORS

WATER FLOATS A SHIP  
WATER SINKS A SHIP

WHAT DO FINE HORSEMEN  
KNOW OF ACHING FEET?

A LITTLE IMPATIENCE . . .  
BIG PLANS RUINED

A WHALE  
IN SHALLOW WATER  
AMUSES THE SHRIMPS

NEW CLOTHES ARE BEST . . .  
AND OLD FRIENDS

A GOOD TEACHER . . .  
BETTER THAN A BARROWFUL  
OF BOOKS

FIRST SEE THE HARE . . .  
THEN LOOSE THE FALCON





THE SAVING MAN  
BECOMES THE FREE MAN

YOU BURN INCENSE  
BEFORE THE GOD . . .  
AND THEN TOPPLE HIM

YOU CANNOT HOOK TROUT?  
TRY DIGGING CLAMS

THE BEST MEMORY . . .  
NOT SO FIRM  
AS FADED INK

CLIMB MOUNTAINS  
TO SEE LOWLANDS

LEARNING IS WEIGHTLESS . . .  
TREASURE YOU ALWAYS  
CARRY EASILY

CUSTOMERS ARE JADE  
MERCHANDISE IS GRASS



LAWS CONTROL  
THE LESSER MAN . . .  
RIGHT CONDUCT CONTROLS  
THE GREATER ONE

EASIER TO RULE A NATION  
THAN A SON

THE MESSENGER OF DEATH  
ENTERS . . .  
AND ALL BUSINESS STOPS

INSECTS DO NOT NEST  
IN A BUSY DOOR-HINGE

UNPLOWED FIELDS MAKE  
HOLLOW BELLIES . . .  
UNREAD BOOKS MAKE  
HOLLOW MINDS

BIGGEST PROFITS  
MEAN GRAVEST RISKS





DISEASES ARE OFTEN CURED  
NEVER FATE

WHILE YOU ARE BARGAINING  
CONCEAL YOUR COIN

LEARNING IS TREASURE  
NO THIEF CAN TOUCH

TO STOP DRINKING . . .  
STUDY A DRUNKARD  
WHILE YOU ARE SOBER

SORROW IS THE CHILD  
OF TOO MUCH JOY

WITH MONEY A DRAGON  
WITHOUT MONEY A WORM

AT THE BATHING BEACH  
WHICH MEN  
ARE GENTLEMEN?

UGLY WIVES  
STUPID SERVANT GIRLS . . .  
WHAT TREASURES!

SPRING . . . CHANGEABLE  
AS STEPMOTHER'S FACE

WITHOUT SORROWS  
NO ONE BECOMES A SAINT

AT BIRTH WE COME  
AT DEATH WE GO . . .  
BEARING NOTHING

O MAN, YOU WHO DO NOT  
LIVE A HUNDRED . . .  
WHY FRET A THOUSAND?

MAN HAS  
A THOUSAND PLANS . . .  
HEAVEN BUT ONE





HEAVEN IS ONLY THREE FEET  
ABOVE YOUR HEAD

SOFT GRASS  
FOLLOWS EVERY BREEZE

DO NOT PEDDLE WOOD  
IN THE FOREST...  
OR FISH BY THE LAKE SHORE

HAPPY PEOPLE  
NEVER COUNT  
HOURS AS THEY PASS

AN OLD FRIEND MET  
IN A FAR COUNTRY...  
RAIN AFTER DROUGHT

THE PINE STAYS GREEN  
IN WINTER...  
WISDOM IN HARDSHIP

NO SHADE-TREE?  
BLAME NOT THE SUN  
BUT YOURSELF

THREE FEET OF ICE . . .  
NOT FROZEN IN ONE DAY

WITH VIRTUE YOU CANNOT  
BE ENTIRELY POOR . . .  
WITHOUT IT YOU CANNOT  
BE REALLY RICH

IF THE OX WON'T DRINK  
DON'T TRY TO BEND HIS NECK

GREAT DOUBTS  
DEEP WISDOM . . .  
SMALL DOUBTS  
LITTLE WISDOM

TO LOCK UP MISCHIEF  
SHUT YOUR MOUTH



WHEN THE WATERS SINK  
THE STONES SHOW

IF THE FIRST WORDS FAIL . . .  
TEN THOUSAND  
WILL NOT THEN AVAIL

WHEN THE EMPEROR GLARES  
THAT MAN IS DEAD

MANKIND FEARS AN EVIL MAN  
BUT HEAVEN DOES NOT . . .

MANKIND SCORNS  
A VIRTUOUS MAN  
BUT HEAVEN DOES NOT

TO LIGHT THE LAMP  
BEFORE BUDDHA . . .  
FIRST EXTINGUISH SELF

BETTER DIE TEN YEARS EARLY  
THAN LIVE TEN YEARS POOR



TOWERS ARE MEASURED  
BY THEIR SHADOWS . . .  
GREAT MEN BY THOSE  
WHO SPEAK ILL OF THEM

ONE LAMP CANNOT LIGHT  
TWO HOUSES

MAN'S LIFE . . .  
CANDLE IN THE WIND  
FROST ON THE TILES

WINE IN SMALL GULPS . . .  
KNOWLEDGE IN LARGE

THE HAPPINESS  
IN YOUR POCKET . . .  
DON'T SPEND IT ALL

IN PRESENCE OF PRINCES  
THE CLEVEREST JESTER  
IS MUTE





POOR IN TROUBLES . . .

POOR IN DREAMS

BUTTERFLIES

SHOULD NOT TALK OF SNOW

NOR WORMS OF HEAVEN

DEER-HUNTER . . .

WASTE NOT YOUR ARROW

ON THE HARE

TO HAVE PRINCIPLES

FIRST HAVE COURAGE

THE WISE MAN

HEARKENS TO HIS MIND . . .

THE FOOLISH MAN

TO HIS CRONIES

IF IN THE DARK

HE KNEELS TO PRAY . . .

HE REALLY PRAYS

HEAT COMES EQUALLY  
TO ALL . . .

COLD RESPECTS  
THE RICH MAN'S FURS

GOOD DEEDS STAY INDOORS . . .  
EVIL DEEDS TRAVEL  
MANY MILES FROM HOME

WHEN THE THATCH IS THIN:  
THUNDERSTORMS . . .  
WHEN THE JUNK SETS SAIL:  
HEADWINDS

TILE TOSSED  
OVER THE WALL . . .  
WHO CAN TELL  
WHERE IT MAY FALL?

MEN KNOW NOT ALL  
THEIR FAULTS . . .  
OXEN ALL THEIR STRENGTH





A WHITE WASHED CROW  
SOON SHOWS BLACK AGAIN

MEN FATED TO BE HAPPY  
NEED NOT HASTE

IF YOU ALWAYS GIVE  
YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE

WITH MONEY YOU CAN CALL  
THE VERY GODS TO HELP . . .  
WITHOUT IT  
NOT A SINGLE MAN

BLAME YOURSELF  
AS YOU BLAME OTHERS . . .  
FORGIVE OTHERS  
AS YOU FORGIVE YOURSELF

ONLY TWO KINDS OF MEN  
ARE GOOD . . .  
BURIED AND UNBORN

IN HIS DECISION  
THE JUDGE  
WITH SEVEN REASONS  
GIVES ONLY ONE IN COURT

ONE FAMILY  
BUILDS THE WALL . . .  
TWO FAMILIES ENJOY IT

AMONG TEN MATCHMAKERS  
ONLY NINE WILL LIE

ONE DAY WITHOUT FOOD  
A HUSBAND TURNS COLD . . .  
THREE DAYS WITHOUT FOOD  
A WIFE TURNS COLD

TRAVELING BY BOAT?  
PREPARE FOR WETTING

TEACHERS OPEN THE DOOR . . .  
YOU ENTER BY YOURSELF





THOUSAND YEARS A GHOST...  
AH, BETTER ONE DAY A MAN

TOO OFTEN  
GREAT POLITENESS MEANS:  
I WANT SOMETHING

HE USES CANNON  
TO SHOOT BIRDS

KNOW THYSELF  
TO KNOW OTHERS...  
FOR HEART  
BEATS LIKE HEART

LEAVE A BIT OF THE TAIL  
TO WHISK OFF FLIES

PICK YOUR INN  
BEFORE THE DARK...  
GET ON YOUR ROAD  
BEFORE THE DAWN

IN THE LITTLE BOY  
SEE THE FINAL MAN

NINE SONS SHE BORE  
NINE SEPARATE CHARACTERS

HIS VIRTUES EXCEED  
HIS TALENTS . . .  
A SUPERIOR MAN

HIS TALENTS EXCEED  
HIS VIRTUES . . .  
AN INFERIOR ONE

SOFT TONGUE STAYS . . .  
HARD TEETH FALL

ONE RAT DROPPING  
SPOILS A POT OF RICE

SILLY TOAD: PLANNING  
A MEAL OF GOOSE!







WHILE YOU HOLD THE BOW  
IN PAWN . . .  
YOU ARE SAFE FROM ARROWS

A BIG FISH . . .  
THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

PLAN YOUR YEAR IN SPRING  
YOUR DAY AT DAWN

THE TONGUE LIKE A  
SHARP KNIFE . . . KILLS  
WITHOUT DRAWING BLOOD

WHEN YOU GO OUT  
WATCH THE CLOUDY SKY . . .  
WHEN YOU GO IN  
WATCH YOUR HOST'S EYE

WHEN BROTHERS SPLIT . . .  
OUTSIDERS  
ENTER THE BREACH

TWO BARRELS OF TEARS  
DO NOT HEAL A BRUISE

PRACTICE NO VICE  
BECAUSE IT'S TRIVIAL . . .  
NEGLECT NO VIRTUE  
BECAUSE IT'S SO

NURTURE THE PLANT  
ONE YEAR . . .  
TEN DAYS OF FLOWERS

FRIENDSHIP OF OFFICIALS . . .  
THIN AS THEIR PAPERS

'TWIXT MONASTERY  
AND CONVENT  
NO INTERCOURSE . . .  
THEY SAY

ATTEND THE EMPEROR . . .  
SLEEP WITH A TIGER





RICH MEN  
ACCUMULATE MONEY...  
POOR ACCUMULATE YEARS

THE WISE MAN TARRIES NOT  
TO INSTRUCT THE FOOL

LIFE IS A DREAM WALKING  
DEATH IS A GOING HOME

EASIER TO BEND  
THE BODY THAN THE MIND

STOUT MEN  
NOT STOUT WALLS  
MAKE THE STOUT CITY

FATHER: NEVER GO BOND  
FOR A DAUGHTER'S VIRTUE

ENTIRE LEISURE FOR A DAY...  
IMMORTALITY IN LITTLE

TO BE HEARD AFAR . . .  
BANG YOUR GONG  
ON A HILL-TOP

MAN CONCOCTS  
A MILLION SCHEMES . . .  
GOD KNOWS BUT ONE

RICHES: A DREAM  
IN THE NIGHT . . .  
FAME: A GULL  
FLOATING ON WATER

YOU CAN'T CLAP  
WITH ONE HAND ONLY

MY TEACHER FOR ONE DAY  
MY FATHER FOR LIFE

WITHOUT DETERMINATION  
MAN IS AN  
UNTEMPERED SWORD





SILLY BOYS  
IN TIME BECOME  
SILLY OLD MEN

PURE GOLD DOES NOT FEAR  
THE SMELTER

FIRST HALF THE NIGHT  
THINK OF  
YOUR OWN FAULTS . . .  
SECOND HALF  
THE FAULTS OF OTHERS

NO MEDICINES CAN CURE  
THE VULGAR MAN

THE EMPEROR IS RICH  
BUT HE CANNOT BUY  
ONE EXTRA YEAR

BROTHERS  
ARE LIKE HANDS AND FEET

THE BEST HORSE  
CANNOT WEAR TWO SADDLES

IF YOUR SONS ARE GOOD  
DO YOU NEED MONEY?  
IF YOUR SONS ARE BAD  
SHOULD YOU KEEP MONEY?

NO ROAD TO HAPPINESS  
OR SORROW...  
FIND THEM IN YOURSELF

THREE EARLY RISINGS  
MAKE AN EXTRA DAY

MONEY COMES LIKE SAND  
SCOOPED WITH A NEEDLE...  
MONEY GOES LIKE SAND  
WASHED BY WATER

A BEAUTIFUL BIRD...  
THE ONLY KIND WE CAGE



DELICACY OF THE FEAST...  
THE LEARNED GUEST

MAN CANNOT STIR ONE INCH  
WITHOUT THE PUSH  
OF HEAVEN'S FINGER

MISTRESS SLACK  
SERVANTS SLOVEN

DON'T WASTE YOUR HOUR:  
THE SUN SETS SOON

LIGHTS OF A  
THOUSAND STARS  
DO NOT MAKE ONE MOON

NO GUESTS AT HOME...  
NO HOSTS ABROAD

DON'T USE OILED PAPER  
TO WRAP UP FIRE





BLIND LEADING THE BLIND...  
BEWARE THE RIVER EDGE!

GREAT BUSINESS IS GOOD...  
TO SIT AND SIP THIS GLASS  
IS BETTER

GET THE COFFIN READY...  
WATCH THE MAN MEND

SLOW WORK... FINE WORK

WHEN GUESTS HAVE GONE  
THE HOST BREATHES DEEP

NOT WINE... MEN  
INTOXICATE THEMSELVES;  
NOT VICE... MEN  
ENTICE THEMSELVES

CHEAT THE EARTH...  
EARTH WILL CHEAT YOU





“I HEARD” IS GOOD . . .

“I SAW” IS BETTER

THE PEN CAN KILL A MAN . . .

NO KNIFE IS NEEDED

HE COMES WITH INCENSE  
IN ONE HAND . . .

IN THE OTHER A SPEAR

WHEN THE CAT IS GONE . . .

THE MICE

COME OUT TO STRETCH

BLESSINGS NEVER COME  
IN PAIRS . . .

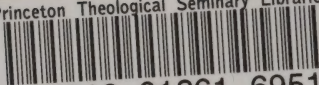
ILLS NEVER COME ALONE

THOUGH A TREE GROW  
A THOUSAND FEET . . .

THE FRUITS WILL FALL  
TO EARTH AGAIN



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CHINESE  
PROVERBS  
FROM  
OLDEN  
TIMES

